



## 2024 National Order of the Arrow Conference

### **Session:** Maximizing Your Scholarship Chances

**Lead Trainer Name:** Pattie Nortman

**Contact Email:** pnortman@gmail.com

**Contact Phone:** (720) 284-1470

**Session Length:** 45 minutes

### **Session Description**

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Participants will learn how to identify scholarships that align with their academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and personal interests. The session covers essential topics such as crafting compelling application essays, preparing effective recommendations, and understanding the criteria used by scholarship committees. This session is ideal for students seeking financial assistance for their educational pursuits, offering them valuable insights and practical tips to increase their chances of securing scholarships.

### **Learning Outcomes**

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**Outcome 1:** Understand how to find, apply for, and maximize college scholarships.

**Outcome 2:** Learn how to submit compelling scholarship applications.

**Outcome 3:** Develop skills in writing effective scholarship essays.

### **Theme Connection: Seek New Heights**

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Attendees will be reminded that they don't need to wait to SEEK scholarship opportunities until their senior year. They will be encouraged to begin their research now, create a tracking spreadsheet, and to start brainstorming essay themes. By elevating their understanding of the scholarship process, they will hopefully discover NEW financial HEIGHTS.

## Facility and Material Needs

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### Facility Needs

*Is this session remote delegate-compatible?* Yes  
(ie. can the material be engagingly taught via live stream)

*Does this session need audio/video (AV) capabilities?* Yes  
(ie. projector)

*Are there any other specific facility needs for this session?* No  
(ie. movable chairs, panel-style seating, etc.)

### Material Needs

Material	Quantity	Source
N/A		

## Session Preparation Steps

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**Step 1:** Update Template Theme and Slides 2, 13, and 14 for Content.

**Step 2:** Create notecards or other preferred presenter notes to assist with delivery.

**Step 3:** Review listed resource links and update with more recent sources, as needed.

**Step 4:** Prepare updated handout with any new links identified in Step 3 and make copies for distribution post-session. The handout used for the 2024 sessions is included at the end of this syllabus.

## Additional Staff Members

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Trainer Name	Email	Phone #
N/A		

## Lesson Plan

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### Meet Your Trainer

1 minute

*Slide 2*

### Introduction and Objectives

1 minute

*Slide 3*

- Welcome participants and introduce the seminar's objectives.
- Highlight the significance of scholarships and how they can alleviate the financial burden of college education and reduce post-grad debt

### Topic 1: Types and Sources of Scholarships

8 minutes

*Slide 4*

- Explain the different types of scholarships:
  - Merit-based: Academic excellence, leadership, extracurricular achievements.
  - Need-based: Financial need assessments.
  - Talent-based: Artistic, musical, athletic talents.
  - Demographic-based: Specific to gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.
  - Field-specific: For students pursuing particular majors or careers.
- Explain different scholarship sources:
  - Colleges and Universities: Institutional scholarships.
  - Private Organizations: Corporations, non-profits, community groups.
  - Government: Federal and state scholarships.
  - Professional Associations: Industry-specific scholarships.
- Reference [Federal Student Aid](#) for more detailed information.

### Topic 2: Finding Scholarships

6 minutes

*Slide 5*

- Discuss various methods to find scholarships:
  - Utilizing school counselors and financial aid offices.
  - Exploring online databases and scholarship search engines. Stress importance of creating a profile and applying filters. Fastweb, Scholarship.com, Cappex.

- Engaging with community organizations and local businesses.
- Connecting with professional associations and industry groups.
- Highlight the [US News article](#) for detailed strategies and examples.

### Topic 3: Developing a Compelling Application Package

10 minutes

*Slides 6-8*

- **Letters of Recommendation:**
  - Choosing the right recommenders
  - How to request strong, personalized letters
- **Resume and Extracurricular Activities:**
  - Building a robust and well-rounded resume.
  - Showcasing leadership, volunteer work, and relevant experiences.
- **Academic Transcripts and Test Scores:**
  - Ensuring accuracy and including additional certifications or coursework.
- **Essay:**
  - Tips for writing compelling, personal, and focused essay.
  - Understanding and addressing the essay prompt clearly.
  - Emphasize the importance of understanding the requirements and tailoring the application accordingly, including word count limits.
  - Crafting a narrative that is both clear and engaging.
  - Highlighting personal achievements, experiences, and challenges.
  - Stress the need to avoid common mistakes, such as missing deadlines or submitting incomplete applications.
  - The importance of proofreading and editing to ensure clarity and correctness.
  - Refer to resources from [Princeton Review](#) and [Going Merry](#) for more detailed guidance.
- **Avoiding Common Mistakes:**
  - Missing Deadlines
  - Incomplete Applications
  - Word Count Violations

### Topic 4: Utilizing Tools and Resources

5 minutes

*Slide 9*

- **Organization Tools:**
  - Spreadsheet for tracking deadlines, requirements, and submission statuses.
  - Calendar apps and reminder systems.

- **Financial Aid Office:**
  - Leveraging the college financial aid office for additional resources and advice.
- **Workshops and Seminars:**
  - Attending additional seminars on essay writing, interview preparation, etc.

## Activity

7 minutes

Slide 10

**Activity**

**Materials Needed:** none  
**Length of Activity:** 7  
**Activity Description:** Essay Prompt Practice

- Provide participants with a sample scholarship essay prompt.
- Allow them time to brainstorm and outline their essay.
- Discuss challenges of the process - creating a starting point, structuring ideas, etc
  - **Sample Essay Prompt:** "Describe a significant challenge you have faced and how you overcame it. How did this experience shape your goals and aspirations?"

## Conclusion and Q&A

5 minutes

Slide 11

- Summarize key takeaways from the seminar.
- Encourage participants to explore the resources provided for further guidance.
- Open the floor for any questions and provide answers or additional insights as needed.

## Final Tips and Encouragement

2 minutes

Slide 12

- Stay persistent and organized.
- Regularly seek new opportunities.
- Don't be discouraged by rejections—keep applying.
- Takeaway Challenge

## Appendix: Resources and Source Material

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Resource	Link
Order of the Arrow, Mission & Purpose	Available online at: <a href="https://oa-bsa.org/about/mission-purpose">https://oa-bsa.org/about/mission-purpose</a>
US News, How to Find and Secure Scholarships for College	<a href="https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/articles/how-to-find-and-secure-scholarships-for-college">https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/articles/how-to-find-and-secure-scholarships-for-college</a>
Princeton Review, Writing a Winning College Scholarship Essay	<a href="https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/scholarship-essays">https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/scholarship-essays</a>
Going Merry, 13 Tips to Bring Your Scholarship Essay to the Next Level	<a href="https://www.goingmerry.com/blog/scholarship-essay-tips/">https://www.goingmerry.com/blog/scholarship-essay-tips/</a>
Federal Student Aid	<a href="https://studentaid.gov/">https://studentaid.gov/</a>

## IMPROVING YOUR SCHOLARSHIP CHANCES

Federal Student Aid



How to Find and Secure  
Scholarships for College  
(US News)



Writing a Winning College  
Scholarship Essay  
(The Princeton Review)



13 Tips to Bring Your  
Scholarship Essay to the  
Next Level (Going Merry)





9 Best Scholarships  
Websites and Search  
Engines (Forbes)



Most Popular Scholarship  
Essay Prompts and Questions  
(College Essay)



Worksheet: Scholarship  
Application Tracker  
(Education Credit  
Management Corp)

